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## Do They Practice What They Preach?

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# THE IOWA HOMEMAKER

"A Magazine for Homemakers from a Homemaker's School"

VOLUME I

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NUMBER 11

## Do They Practice What They Preach?

By HELEN EASTER

**W**HAT'S THIS you're saying? They don't practice what they preach? Not so hasty in your judgment, please, for the defense is ready. The art of home making is not taught by mere theorists at Iowa State College.

If you have lived in Ames you know how difficult and unsatisfactory rooming conditions are. Perhaps that is why most of our home economics teachers have preferred to adopt the "co-operative apartment" plan. Perhaps that explains why there are just two who are not a definite part of some family with a real home to turn to after teaching hours.

The most of them live in groups of three or four, sharing together all expense and household tasks. Not a few are making homes for their mothers and are doubly fortunate. A mother can add just the real home tone to these little establishments, for it's the pleasantest feeling in the world to know that there's some one waiting for you at home after a day of work.

It was tea time on Saturday afternoon when I visited one of these apartments, and that is the very best time to chat about domestic problems. I had always had an insatiable curiosity as to whether one really ever bothered with expense accounts and preserve labels, or scientific cleaning closets with varied-sized brooms and mops. I had learned it all in "Care of the House." It sounded good but being rather a novice and backed by a few opinions of my elders on the tomfoolery and new-fangledness of modern housekeeping ideas, I was a little skeptical. But here was the instructor and here was her home. And here were the very things my notebook described.

The kitchenette was in ivory, (desperately hard to keep clean, Miss Hesse admitted). It was very tiny and since no cleaning closet had been provided, an improvised one served the purpose. It was just a corner curtained off the room and had plenty of conveniently arranged hooks where reposed the broom and dustless mop, (which was all neatly encased in a paper bag).

The curtains were of blue checked gingham, cunning two-tiered affairs so that they could be drawn aside to let in the sunshine from either the top or bottom sash. There were the little white spice cans, all neatly and artistically labeled, and above the radiator was an ingenious little cabinet device which revealed the dish cloths and cleaning agents, (quite a helpful hint to the housewife who likes to keep her towels clean and dry and out of sight). There was a handy little table affair, just a square board enameled and fastened to the wall with hinges so that it could be folded

close to the wall when not in use. The one chair obligingly turned into a step-ladder at need. In fact it was a home economics kitchen, in every respect.

The living room was charming with its fireplace all ready for a cozy evening, its sunny south exposure, its wicker and mahogany; and more than that, there was Miss Hesse's mother sewing, or rather creating a cuddly black cat out of old stocking tops with a needle and thread. (You might guess it was Christmas time.) It wasn't much like the "hall bedroom" descriptions of teaching trial.

"Come home with me to lunch," Miss Murphy insisted when I broached the subject of how our instructors live. Of course I went and we pattered along in the rain over to the Welch Avenue apartment where Miss Eda Lord Murphy lives in partnership with Miss Jessie McCorkindale. I was at home in a minute and while Miss Murphy stirred up some "Murphy muffins" and whisked up some salad dressing I washed the lettuce and got out the silver and china. In less time than you could say "Jack Robinson," we were ready for lunch, and it was good, too. "Murphy muffins" and marmalade are delicious.

We chatted on and soon in an off-hand manner I mentioned budgets. "I just hope you don't fall right over dead but we do keep one," she admitted, "and we have a separate banking account in a different bank for our household expenditures." — Home Economics again! But the campanile struck. I had to leave, for "one o'clocks" are not to be disregarded. So with a pocket full of raisins and a big piece of fudge she sent me off to class for all the world like any tardy little schoolgirl, with the admonition, "Don't be late and come again."

"I'd love to," I answered.

I had visited another little apartment not long before. This was a more compact arrangement, a regular pocket edition of HOME, but oh! how cozy with its pretty rugs and pictures. Here too were signs of scientific training, home economics, careful planning for everything. Each article had been carefully selected, replacing gradually more temporary furniture. "I hated to think of just rooming while I was teaching," Miss Busse explained. "My mother suggested the idea and father advanced me the money for the first pieces of furniture I bought. I returned the money to him the first year and counted it as my savings for that year. Since then I have added something each year and father has helped, too."

Miss Bailey lives with Miss Busse and has helped furnish the apartment. The

kitchen is in ivory enamel. The breakfast set was created from an attractive old-fashioned table, enameled, and six little chairs, durable and inexpensive but excellent in line.

The kitchen and dining room were one room here and a gay cretonne screen marked the dividing line, giving an air of privacy to the "dining room." There was a small cupboard with pretty wash curtains, that contained china and silver that any housewife might envy. But of course it would be thus at the home of the instructor of meal planning.

Two of the art teachers and two from the mathematics department have another apartment. They have been fortunate enough to possess some beautiful pieces of Colonial furniture that have been in the families for years, a day bed with spindle legs, and handsome old highboys and mirrors. And here again was the much advised cleaning closet,—brooms and vacuum complete. I recognized it by its similarity to a certain problem I had struggled over in "House Design."

Some of the instructors live with families who make them feel that they are a real part of the family and they are glad to help in any way they can.

From my visits I learned that not only are these homes visibly the results of home economics training in their scientific and artistic arrangements, but they are scientifically managed as well. Most of them either definitely budget the income, or have a definite plan of expenditure.

In Miss Hesse's apartment there are three besides Miss Hesse and her mother. Two of them are extension workers and cannot know when they will be "in" or "out," which necessitates a system which is pliable. The rent and operating expenses are shared equally with some allowance for time away from home. Miss Hurd takes charge of this end of it and pays all these bills. Miss Hesse manages the food and work list. The house is divided and Miss Hesse and her mother take charge for two weeks and the other three take the management for three weeks. When on duty they not only prepare the meals but they wash up afterwards. "Standards of cleanliness," Miss Hesse explained. "Some people clean up as they go along and some don't. Besides it's nice to know you haven't a single thing you have to do sometimes."

In this apartment they have a price agreed upon for each meal and pay for only the meals they eat. Each knows the approximate number of meals she will have at home during the month and she advances that amount to the treasurer.

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PREACH

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urer. If at the end of the month after all bills are paid she has not had enough meals to cover the amount, the money is refunded or applied on next month's bill.

At some of the other apartments the system is not quite so elaborate. Where there are just two, usually they share alike all expense and work together.

To anyone who has suffered the hardships of being simply a roomer or boarder there is no doubt as to the success of the co-operative apartment plan these instructors have adopted. It is much cheaper and it is much pleasanter, for after all there is no place like home and when you're teaching Home Making it is natural to want to make one of your own.

So in answer to your question, "Do they practice what they preach?"

Indeed they do!

## CAFE-AU-LAIT

What is cafe-au-lait and cafe-noir?

Cafe-au-lait is three parts of milk to one of coffee. The "cafe noir" of the French, is coffee made strong with water only. "Cafe-au-lait" must not be made by boiling coffee and milk together, as milk is not proper to extract the essential properties of the coffee, and coffee must be made as "cafe noir," only stronger. As much of this coffee is poured into the cup as is required, and the cup is then filled up with boiled milk.

A man or woman in public or in private life who works only for the sake of the reward that comes for the work will, in the long run do poor work always. I do not care where the work is, the man or woman who lives, breathes, and sleeps that work; with whom it is ever present in his or her soul; whose ambition is to do it well and feel rewarded by the thought of having done it well; that man, that woman puts the whole country under an obligation.—John Ruskin.

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